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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/777,024	02/11/2004	Steven A. Burke	10139/104	2220
23595	7590	01/06/2005	EXAMINER	
NIKOLAI & MERSEREAU, P.A. 900 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH SUITE 820 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402			KOVACS, ARPAD F	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3671	

DATE MAILED: 01/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/777,024	BURKE ET AL
	Examiner Árpád Fábián Kovács	Art Unit 3671

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address —
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 February 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22 and 23 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 18-21 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/1/2004.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claim 1, drawn to mower support having side axis, mid axis, front axis, pivot axis, swivel axis, either parallel to a towing direction or perpendicular to it or to each other, classified in class 56, subclass 6.
 - II. Claim 22, drawn to handheld remote control device, classified in class 341, subclass 176.
 - III. Claim 23, drawn to solenoid starter with timer, classified in class 388, subclass 842.
2. Inventions I and II and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, inventions have separate utility such as controlling operation remotely of a mower (group II), and timer actuating a starter solenoid of a car (group III), and pivotally supporting gang mowers (group I). See MPEP § 806.05(d).
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II or III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. During a telephone conversation with Alan D Kamrath on 1/4/2005 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-21. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action.

Claims 22-23 withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

In order to expedite the prosecution of the case, Applicant is requested to cancel non-elected claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meyer (6526735), in view of Doerflinger (6412258).

Meyer discloses the claimed device except for the rear mower having kind of support claimed, namely, a mid axis, a swivel axis perpendicular to the mid axis, a pivot axis perpendicular to the mid axis and the swivel axis. The first two mowers are provided with the front that is perpendicular to the towing direction (see fig 2, about ref 4), and first and second side axis parallel to the towing direction (see fig 2, about ref 11).

Doerflinger discloses that it is known in the art to provide a 3 axes to support, pivot, swivel the mower as claimed, see fig 2.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the rear mower of Meyer with the teachings of Doerflinger, in order to follow the ground contour more closely.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 18-21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Robinson, Bednar et al., Carr.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Árpád Fábián Kovács whose telephone number is 703-308-5897. The examiner can normally be reached on Mo-Th.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 703 308 3870. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Árpád Fábián Kovács
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3671

ÁFK